

an unnatural modification. The productions of both these methods will be monstrous, and will never be considered as works of an elegant art.

We are convinced it is as much indispensable to the young artist to study the former styles of his art as it is necessary for the learned man to study the ancient languages, and surely the experienced artist's delight in admiring the excellencies of ancient art may be greater than that of the most learned philologist diving into the treasures of the ancient languages. Yet the form in itself will never instruct the young artist or delight the master, but only its harmony with the idea from whence it sprang.

And because the genius of our time is quite different from that of former ages, it is impossible it can be expressed in ancient forms without giving discords instead of harmony.

Granted that nearly all gave up the erroneous idea to re-establish one of the former styles in our time, yet many will be found embracing the no less error of maintaining, that not a single style alone should be used everywhere in the works of our architecture, but that we must keep close to the most accomplished forms of all styles, and for every building choose the pattern most convenient to its intended character. So, for instance, for a theatre the Greek, or lately the rococo style, for a church the Gothic, for a palace the Florentine or Venetian, for a sepulchre the ancient Dorien or Egyptian style.

But should it not be very curious to see in different dispositions of mind alternately different languages? Or what should be thought of a poet who supposing it needful would compose a hymn in Hebrew, a lay in German, a sonnet in Italian, a romance in Spanish, and an ode in Latin?

Just the same would it be with an architect presuming every style to have a right of being naturalised in every country and nation, believing the choice of style only dependent upon the destination of the building, confining every style to a sort of buildings, and fancying that no right exists to use it beyond these limits, not able, perhaps, to find a higher sense in the idea of style than in the difference of the regiments of an army according to the kind of service to which the soldiers belong.

But those labour under still greater a mistake who, in choosing the style for their buildings, are led either by their own fancy or by that of another or by chance, who do not care at all whether the peculiar destination of the building be in harmony with the general character of the style they are about to choose or no, provided their buildings have an imposing exterior, though serving even very vulgar purposes. But let the first impression of a profane building be masked with as grand an architecture as it will, the allusion will as soon vanish as we are informed of the real destination of the building, and the remaining effect will then be no other than the constant remembrance of the fable which shows us—the ass in the lion's skin.

To find illusion where it is intended, for instance, on the stage, may give delight; but to meet with it in real life affects us with displeasure or pity, or seems, at least, ridiculous. If in a masquerade the water-carrier makes his appearance as a sultan, the lime-burner or miller's man as a well armoured knight, they are in their right, and nobody will dispute this right for the time of its validity, that is, for a night. But at sunrise all is changed, and woe to the nightly roamer who is obliged to pass the market in such borrowed finery.

Passing over the opposite extreme of exhibiting all sorts of flat, insipid forms of no style at all, even in the most important edifices, as too far from the proper sphere of the true elegant art, we are lastly to mention that false method of modern architecture, whose works make their appearance, as it were, in the motley dress of a fool, patched with patches of all possible styles. In this proceeding may be acknowledged the want of constant principles of our modern architecture in its oddest shape. This arbitrary use and mixture of the most different architectonic forms is the utmost point to which modern architecture in its aberration has been able to arrive.

He to whom architecture is nothing but an arbitrary play with forms, never understood its real essence. Architecture is a language which speaks in the most powerful style

from one generation to another, and bears witness of the genius who animated the different succeeding generations, a language the fragmentary lines, even single letters, of which loudly and clearly speak, when long ago the authors are forgotten, and even history scarcely retains their names. Thus we still acknowledge the genius of ancient Greece in the ruins of the Acropolis of Athens. The vast ruins of Thebes reflect the colour of Egyptian life, as well as you may trace the character of the former Hittites in the rock temples of the Ghat mountains. Thus the Pyramids of Memphis project the uniform shadows of the remotest time into the vicissitudes of our own days.

Will the ruins of our own architecture be able to represent the character of our time, the efforts of its genius? Or, are we merely eclectic and imitators? as the recent best works seem to prove; or is our architecture so mean, that it wants mask and disguise, as in many deplorable buildings of the day? or is our method so inconsistent and desultory, as to delight only in irregular combinations of the fragments of a past glory?

This question has already been answered not only by architects and critics, but even by those who are less initiated into the essence of our art; it has been answered by the general desire of a peculiar style of architecture, which, conforming to the demands of construction as well as of taste, should perfectly satisfy the wants of our present time.

It is, indeed, maintained by some, that the complete system of the really beautiful in architecture has already been produced by its former periods, and that, therefore, nobody could find out any principle of a new style. But we are convinced that art will be eternally young and new, as well as the genius of whom she springs?

#### STATE OF THE SEWERS.

LONG ACRE.

DURING the inquest, last Monday, on the body of a labourer who was killed (on going into the closet) by inhaling bad air from the drain of a house in Langley-court, Long-acre, caused by vitriol being poured into a defective and foul drain, it was proved, that the mouth of the drain leading into an old sewer, built about twenty-four years ago, was nearly choked up. The soil was 3 feet 3 inches in depth at that end of the sewer, and 1 foot 8 inches in Hart-street, and the accumulation was evidently caused by the improper construction of the sewer, which was flat bottomed.

The surveyor of pavements proved that there was no cesspool (the drain itself, let us remark, had become a cesspool); cesspools now were destroyed as nuisances, but forty years ago they would not allow you to have a drain without a cesspool.

Mr. Le Breton said that he attended not only as one of the commissioners of Sewers, but as solicitor for the parish in which this lamentable event had occurred, rather to watch the proceedings than to take any part in them. At the same time, he begged to say both the commissioners and the parish authorities were anxious to remedy any grievance that might exist and which came within their cognizance. The inhabitants of Long-Acre were without a sewer. The commissioners had for many years past been endeavouring to have a sewer constructed, but till last year they had no power to enforce the construction of one. The Mercers' Company were the principal proprietors of the property in the street, and several plans had been submitted them for building a sewer, which would have been attended with a trifling expense, but they had not done it. The Act of last session gave the commissioners power to erect sewers where necessary, and to charge the proprietors of the property with the cost. This power the commissioners now intended to act upon.

•• We have received a contradiction to the remarks on the Westminster Commission of Sewers, which formed our leading article of July 24th; but as it is anonymous, and is simply assertion, we decline inserting it. If the writer will affix his name, it shall appear. To prove the truth of our statements, we need do little more than cite the evidence which was given at the above-named inquest.

#### MR. VERNON'S GIFT TO THE NATION.

THE rumour which has prevailed for some time, that Mr. Vernon intended to present his fine collection of pictures to the nation, is now a certainty, that gentleman having placed it at the immediate disposal of the trustees of the National Gallery. For this noble act the public is most deeply indebted to Mr. Vernon, and it is to be hoped that some public acknowledgment of it will be made. Consisting for the most part of modern works, this collection will form the nucleus of a really national gallery of British art, which the trustees will now feel compelled to increase. Fear of the imputation of favouritism and jobbing has hitherto prevented the trustees from purchasing modern works; but this must be overcome. One other advantage likely to result from this important gift is an early alteration at the National Gallery. Its enlargement has been commenced; but it seems clear either that a fresh building for the national collection must be found, sufficiently large to encourage constant donations, or that the Royal Academy must be provided for elsewhere with the same end in view. Our opinions as to the necessity of this have been long ago expressed.

#### THE BATALLIA.

THIS celebrated monastery, made familiar to many of our readers by Murphy's work, has been visited recently by a correspondent of the *Athenaeum*, from whose account we take the following notes:—

"The Monastery of the Batalha was founded by King John the First, about the year 1386. It is very large and lofty—in the florid or decorated Gothic. The details are fine, but in many respects different from those in English-decorated Gothic. The square abacus of the capitals of the shafts are common,—and many other details which with us belong to a much earlier period. The exterior of the church seems richer in detail than its interior. As the roofs are nearly flat, there are no gable ends; and a richly foliated parapet, with a cresting on the top, goes all round. There are no timber roofs. Those near the nave and transeps are formed by large slabs of marble—or of a hard stonelike marble—of waved form section; which lap over each other somewhat in the manner of our house tiles, and so form a secure and fire-proof roof that rests immediately on the vaulting beneath. The roofs of the aisles are covered with flat paving stones. As there are no sloping roofs over the aisles, there is no triforium gallery, which forms so beautiful a feature in the northern cathedrals. The clerestory windows are immediately over the arches which separate the nave from the aisles; and these arches, with the aisles, are considerably higher in proportion than is usual in our churches. I mention these particulars because I believe Murphy in his work endeavours to show that this abbey was the design of an English architect; a statement which the Conte de Raczynski, in his work entitled *Les Arts en Portugal*, controverts by extracts from Portuguese critics and from the archives.

The interior of the church is fine, simple in its details, and very lofty. Near the entrance at the west end on the south side is the superb mausoleum of King John I. of Portugal and his wife Philippa, the daughter of John of Lancaster. The plan of the mausoleum is a square, in the midst of which are eight clustered or shafted piers supporting an octangular lantern with a vaulted roof. The eight arches are beautiful in their proportions, and foliated richly at their edges. A noble monument, on which lie the effigies of the king and queen, occupies the centre of the mausoleum.

There are two spacious squares of cloisters belonging to this monastery. Those furthest from the church are simple and quaint in their style—of the same date as the church. The grand quadrangle of cloisters with the chapter-house is very rich, and appears to have been completed at a later period. I suppose that no cloisters in Europe can equal these in extent and magnificence. The vaulting is simple, though sufficiently ornamented. It is in the windows or open arcades which separate the cloisters from the green sward in the quadrangle that the architect has chiefly shown his invention. The shafts supporting the tracery are fluted spirally, with various ornament. The